

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 13, 16 and 31 are amended for clarification purposes and claims 21, 28 and 29 are amended to depend from claim 1. Claims 3-4 and 25-26 are made independent and claims 26 and 30 are amended to correct minor typographical errors. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants acknowledge the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative Christian Austin-Hollands during the April 12, 2004 personal interview with Examiner Basom and Supervisory Examiner Cabeca.

During the interview, Applicants' representative argued that the applied art does not disclose, teach or suggest, at least the features of generating a degree of interest (DOI) value for each of said plurality of nodes, said degree of interest value relative to said focus node and sibling node order and corresponding to a node size, as recited in independent claims 1, 13, 16 and 31. The Examiners asserted that based on the broadest interpretation of sibling node order, the description in Lewis at col. 4, lines 40-65 meets these features of the independent claims. However, Supervisory Primary Examiner Cabeca agreed that a clarification of the features in the independent claims to recite "sibling order distance from the focus node", or substantially similar, would render the claims allowable over the applied art of record, but may require further search and/or consideration.

Applicants' amendments clarify the claims, and narrow the issues for Appeal and respond to requirements of form in the Office Action. In particular, Applicants' amendments to independent claims 1, 13, 16 and

31 clarify features previously presented in the claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the entry of these amendments after final rejection.

The February 13, 2004 Office Action objects to claim 26 as containing a typographical error. Claim 26 is amended to correct the typographical error. Applicants' therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to claim 26.

The Office Action withdraws claims 21-24 and 28-30 from consideration as directed to a non-elected invention. This restriction is respectfully traversed. In particular, claims 21, 28 and 29 depend from the independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the restriction requirement.

The Office Action rejects claims 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st as failing to comply with the written description requirements. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 17 recites "determining a fractional degree of interest adjustment for the degree of interest based on the sibling order distance from the focus node" as suggested by the Examiners during the personal interview. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st rejection of claims 17-20.

The Office Action objects to claims 3-4 and 25-27 as dependent on a rejected base claim but indicates these claims are otherwise allowable. Claims 3-4 and 25-26 are made independent by incorporating the features of independent claim 1. Applicants therefore respectfully request the withdrawal of the objection to claims 3-4 and 25-27.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 5-16 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over "Latour – A Tree Visualization System," by Herman et al. ("Herman") in view of various combinations of U.S.

Patent No. 6,486,898 to Martino et al. (“Martino”); “Improving the Visualization of Hierarchies with Treemaps: Design Issues and Experimentation by Turo et al. (“Turo”); “Cone Trees: Animated 3D Visualizations of Hierarchical Information” by Robertson et al. (“Robertson”); U.S. Patent No. 5,786,820 by Robertson (“820”) and U.S. Patent No. 5,987,469 by Lewis et al. (“Lewis”). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action admits that Herman, does not disclose, teach or suggest at least the features directed to generating a degree of interest (DOI) value for each of said plurality of nodes, said degree of interest value relative to said focus node and sibling order distance from the focus node and corresponding to a node size, as recited in independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claims 13, 16 and 31.

The Office Action attempts to remedy these admitted deficiencies by combining Herman with Lewis. Lewis is directed to a method for graphically representing the directories and files located in storage medium such as a computer hard disk drive or the nodes of a tree data structure. Lewis, at for example, col. 4, lines 40-44, describes how “[t]he nodes of the tree are sorted from largest to smallest which assists that program later on in determining how to tile”. Thus, it is clear that Lewis alone or in combination with Herman fails to meet at least this feature of independent claims 1, 13 16 and 31.

Martino describes a device and method for lattice display. However, Martino, at for example, col.7 lines 25-30 also describes sorting the nodes. Thus, Martino also fails to disclose, teach or even suggest the features directed to: generating a degree of interest (DOI) value for each of said plurality of nodes, said degree of interest value relative to said focus node and sibling order distance from the focus node

and corresponding to a node size, as recited in independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claims 13, 16 and 31. Thus, claims 1, 13, 16 and 31 define patentable subject matter over Herman either alone or in combination with Lewis and/or Martino. Claims 2, 5-12, 14-15, 17-24 and 28-30 depend from claims 1 and 13 and therefore define patentable subject matter for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 1, 2, and 5-16 and 31.


In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

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Reply to February 13, 2004 Office Action

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Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance; the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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